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AN
EXPOSITION
OF THE LATE
GENERAL ELECTION,
IN NEW-YORK.

——
BY A CITIZEN OF PENNSYLVANIA.
——

PHILADELPHIA :

1826.

The following Letter was written by a citizen of Pennsylvania, who has recently travelled through the state of New-York, to his friend in Richmond, Virginia, on the subject of the late general election; and as the facts which it details are interesting, and as the *tout ensemble* fully elucidates the arcana of that election, it is given to the public as it came from the author's pen. 81509

Wm. Brewster, Esq.

Aug. 7. 1862

AN EXPOSITION, &c.



SIR,

IN a recent extensive tour through this state, I have had a considerable opportunity of becoming acquainted with its fluctuating and mysterious politics, which are in fact an enigma, puzzling to long resident and native born citizens. It appears that there are several factions or parties in this state. That which supports Governor Clinton is the most numerous and respectable, in talents, character, independence, and education. Uniting in their support of him, they differ in their views of the national administration, and the person most proper to preside over its destinies. Some prefer Adams, some Jackson, and many are opposed to both. Constituted as this party is, Mr. Clay can have no foothold in it; neither his character, private and political, nor his public services, can establish an influence among respectable men. The party in opposition is generally denominated *Bucktails*, and claims exclusively the title of *Republican*, although some of its most prominent men have been the most violent federalists in the Union. The body of this party are well-meaning men, but the leaders are generally ambitious demagogues, who mean to advance themselves by duping the people.—Generally with this party are some of the adherents of Clay, as Samuel Young, Peter B. Porter, John Cramer, and William B. Rochester. Although few in number, and insignifi-

cant in influence, they are like their leader, active, intriguing, factious, and utterly regardless of the means they adopt for the attainment of their ends.

Every person who visits the city of Washington, whether on public duty, private business, or amusement, has remarked the extreme anxiety of Mr. Clay with respect to the state of New-York—his minute and anxious inquiries about men, and their political sympathies and antipathies, and his overweening endeavors to make strong and favorable impressions.—Although the doors of political advancement are forever closed against him, and *mene tekél* is inscribed in characters of adamant upon him, yet his sanguine temperament, his overweening vanity, and unblushing arrogance, induce him to believe that he can, by address and artifice and congenial means, seat himself in the presidential chair ; if not at the expiration of Mr. Adams' first term, certainly at the termination of eight years. Knowing that New-York stands in his way, and particularly one man in it, and that neither the Clintonians nor the Bucktails, are favorably disposed to him, he has attempted to prostrate the former by secret intrigue, and the latter by open oppugnation. Last winter it is supposed that he operated in the city of New-York through some persons who were engaged in fitting out ships of war for the belligerents, in contravention of the rights of neutrality, and thro' others who were seeking official favors from the general government. The Tammany committee of New-York, under this influence, which was then preponderant in that party, urged on the Bucktail members of the legislature a nomination for Governor. Unwilling to encounter the risk of this measure, their leaders hesitated, and finally, as a waiver of the question, called a *Bucktail Convention*, to assemble at Herkimer, in the month of October. They by these means gained time, and had an opportunity of making secret and active preparations. During the whole intervening period they utterly disclaimed all intention of opposing Gov. Clinton. His friends were lulled asleep by the syren voice of simulated friendship, and the election found them in the situa-

tion of undisciplined militia, contending with a regular and well-appointed army.

The darling object of the Bucktail chiefs was to secure a preponderance in the legislature, and as many members of congress as possible.

The policy of the first was to entrench themselves in their offices, and to accomplish the re-election of Mr. Van-Buren to the senate of the United States ; and of the second to strengthen the opposition to the national administration, and to secure the vote of the state in case the election of president was again brought to the house of representatives.

Sensible of their deficiency of strength, they cast about them for the means of enlisting Mr. Clay, and many of the friends of Adams, in their service. With this view their oracle, the Argus, inculcated the policy and necessity of keeping the presidential question and national politics out of view, and was very astute and active in spreading jealousies, by insinuating that Gov. Clinton had higher objects in view than the office of Governor. In order to render the bait more alluring, they held up for the office *William B. Rochester*, a man of very small talents, who had never written any thing worthy of being read, nor performed any thing worthy of being written. He was bound to Mr. Clay by congenial habits—was more versed in Hoyle than in Coke. His pandects were the laws of the turf, and his *jus gentium* the code of the billiard table. He had just been noticed by the national government in the under-strapper appointment of secretary of the Panama mission—an office generally allotted to political subalterns, for which he was indebted to his patron, and which was solicited as a panacea, to relieve him from the evils of hypochondria, and the vices of inactivity. His nomination drew forth the active energies of Mr. Clay, and with him the whole force of the administration ; for whatever may have been the wishes or the views of the president and the other members of his cabinet, no countervailing exertions were manifested. Silence implies consent, and neutrality in this case was attended with all the evils of *bellum flagrans*, or decided hostility. He who

can prevent and does not prohibit a crime, is a participant. It was all along admitted by the cabinet at Washington, that Mr. Clay was busy in intermeddling in the politics of the state; and Mr. Adams, instead of hurling the audacious intruder from office, sate by, with folded arms, and winked at the base proceeding. Men in office took the hint. The Collector of New-York came out openly as chairman of a Tammany meeting, and drew, almost to a man, the whole influence of the custom house after him. The Collector of Buffalo acted on another occasion as secretary. Even the owner of the foundery, opposite to West Point, came forth in battle array, with his 150 laborers in his train. Drawing his aliment from the government, he knew the prescribed course, and sagaciously established a plea for further support. The editor of the American lent the aid of his puny talents, and the influence of his malignant character. Corresponding with Mr. Adams, through little Joe Blunt, he could not mistake his wishes. And last, though not least, Nathan Sanford appeared, as chairman of a public meeting, at Albany, at which Martin Van Buren also officiated as reporter of resolutions. The unwilling chairman was associated with Mr. Clay as a candidate for the vice-presidency, and was known to be a humble parasite. Although he hated Van Buren for supplanting him, and Van Buren despised him as a cypher in all things but what related to sensual and selfish gratifications, yet on this occasion they were in full communion, and enacted the Castor and Pollux, the Valentine and Orson, the Robin Hood and Little John of the concern; and Herod and Pilate were friends.

The poisoned chalice was, in the end, returned to the lips of Clay, and the national administration. Van Buren and his friends have completely outwitted and outmanaged them. He has secured his re-election—he has a majority of members of congress in his interest. They have succeeded in nothing. They have not put down Clinton—they have put down themselves, and their dishonorable conduct is chronicled in the black letters of disgrace. The eyes of the union will now be

opened to the treasonable and base attempts of the national government to destroy by treachery the independence of the state governments

Independently of this unhallowed union, the cause of Gov. Clinton was greatly injured by the false security of his friends. His diminished majority was not owing to defection, but to negligence—not to the loss of friends, but to the activity of enemies. If the twenty or thirty thousand electors, who remained at home, lulled in the lap of security, had turned out and done their duty, his majority would have been but little reduced. This security, I have already remarked, was in a great measure induced by the hypocritical professions of his opponents. Conscious that his administration and his acts were such as to command the public approbation, they cunningly pretended to fall in with the general voice, and openly gave their approval of his official conduct. But, traitor like, these professions were only intended to deceive. After having gained the stations which they sought only for the petty emoluments attached to them, they basely avowed their hostility, and employed all the low and contemptible arts which characterise the little bar room politician. The friends of Governor Clinton were thus, in many instances, quieted into a fatal inactivity, until it was too late to counteract the base artifice, or remedy its effects.

In addition to these, the whole strength of the Canal Board was on this occasion enlisted against him. Those stupendous works which owe their origin, their progress, and their completion to his efforts, were profligately pressed into the service against him. The superintendants of the canal, the toll collectors, the lock keepers, mechanics, and laborers turned out in mass in opposition to him, and without any attempt at concealment. Two toll gatherers were in the Herkimer convention, who organized this hostile array. The expenditures for the last year amounted to half a million of Dollars, and the yearly compensation for ordinary repairs and superintendence, to at least 100,000 dollars. All this was put in full requisition. Regardless of the claims of gratitude and the calls

of honor, the canal commissioners and their agents set in motion this prodigious engine, for the purpose of destroying the individual who had been most instrumental in accomplishing the great undertaking, and of giving them the factitious and undeserved influence which they of consequence possessed. Stationed as these men were, from one extremity of the state to the other, with those dependant upon them, it was no difficult matter to organize their strength, and muster a formidable force. Such was accordingly done. In one instance, in a town near the city of Albany, the laborers employed on this magnificent work were marshalled in regular order, and with their leader at their head, conducted to the poll to deposit their votes, in opposition to the individual who had furnished them with employment. Not satisfied with the removal of Gov. Clinton from the canal board, these commissioners were active and diligent in their endeavors to displace him still more effectually, and to deprive him of every possible manifestation or evidence of the public estimation. After having fattened upon the bounty of the state, and enjoyed the advantages and emoluments of stations which were carved out and created by the exertions and public spirit of Gov. Clinton, these men have hitherto endeavored, by all the little arts which green-eyed jealousy could suggest, to cast odium and defeat upon the agent to whom they owe all their importance. Their efforts thus far have proved unsuccessful, and an abused people will ere long consign them to the contempt and obscurity which their baseness so justly merits.

The remaining officers of the state government, together with the whole corps of county officers, were no less active and busy in their opposition to the re-election of Gov. Clinton. The County Judges, composing a body of about 280 men, with the several District Attornies and other petty officers dependent upon them for their appointments, were all ranked in open hostility to his election. The term of office of these men it was known expired during the time for which the new governor was to be chosen. As their re-nomination was to proceed from him, they were therefore anxious to se-

cure an individual who might be moulded to their views, and on whom they could rely for his subserviency and obedience to the prescriptions of their party discipline. This influence was of course diffused throughout the state, and each county possessed its organized band, led on by these office holders, and drilled into submission by their mercenary retainers.

The more important officers of government were equally zealous and indefatigable in their efforts to defeat the election of Gov. Clinton. Their first desire undoubtedly was to secure a majority in both or either branch of the legislature, in order to render safe their own places. With some this was probably all they wished or hoped to accomplish. Their former hostility to Mr. Adams, and their contempt for his coalescing agent, Clay, forbade a cordial or hearty support of his minion, Mr. Secretary Rochester. His defeat, therefore, was rather hoped for than deprecated. But these dependants on party were forced to partake of the bitter cup which was offered them. They were obliged, by their fears of the loss of office, and their hatred to the person of Gov. Clinton, to yield their exertions and influence, both personal and official, to the support of his opponent. The success of Gov. Clinton might endanger both branches of the legislature, and thus they might be ousted from their lucrative stations. Their fears overcame their wishes, and their principle was made to bend to mercenary considerations. Themselves and their clerks and agents accordingly were seen busily employed in the opposition. The influence of office was made instrumental in still further maintaining the ascendancy of the Bucktail party, and in defeating the re-election of Mr. Clinton.

The same feelings even found their way to the halls and seats of justice. The supreme and circuit judges were all arrayed on the side of the opposition, and, as far as the dignity of their stations would permit, were actively engaged in advancing its interests. The intensity and bitterness of these feelings may be estimated from one instance, with which I have been furnished.

The character and inestimable worth of Gen. Van Rensse-

laer, of Albany, is undoubtedly known to you. His disinterested efforts for the advancement of the interests of education, and his distinguished philanthropy, have repeatedly called forth the encomiums of impartial men. He is, however, known to be the personal and political friend of Gov. Clinton, and has for several years been returned by his supporters to the Congress of the union. At the late election he was again nominated by his former friends ; and notwithstanding there was no opponent, the chief justice of the state of New-York declined to give his vote for this patriotic individual.* The ermine of the bench, and the majesty of justice, when suffered to grace the persons of narrow minds, are certain to be perverted to selfish and sinister purposes.

With this weight of official influence and state patronage arrayed in firm hostility against him, it is not surprising that the majority of Gov. Clinton should have been diminished. Indeed, it is most surprising how he could have borne up and succeeded at all. To those in other states who are acquainted with the vast influence which it collects and concentrates, it will truly be a matter of wonder, how, in the great state of New-York, whose resources and strength so far exceed all others, he could have for a moment resisted this accumulated force. These efforts have, however, proved unavailing. The state has supported its character for consistency and gratitude, and this combination of office holders has been taught that even their unhallowed union cannot prostrate the man whom the people delight to honor.

Besides the preceding causes, there are others more deeply implanted in human nature, which have not been without their effects at the late election. Some, from a mere love of change, were induced to give their votes for a new candidate. From curiosity they were desirous of seeing how another man would administer the government, and how the affairs of state would

* The rancour and perfect organization of the opposition may be still further judged of, by the fact that in the County of Albany, altho' Gen. Van Rensselaer had no opponent, he received only 87 votes more than Gov. Clinton.

be managed under his administration. Others with a jealousy which, when confined within proper limits, is rather to be encouraged and commended, were fearful that Governor Clinton would obtain too large a majority, and become too confident of his strength. With a caution and foresight which is the best security for the integrity of republican institutions, they were well aware that great strength frequently beget arrogance, and a disregard for the public will. These individuals, had they, however, for a moment supposed that their votes could at all endanger the ultimate success of Gov. Clinton, would have been the last to throw their influence into the opposite scale. The same patriotic feelings which induced them to guard against the consequences of overwhelming success, would have still more powerfully induced them to render at least certain the re-election of the man whom they could not but desire to see continued in the office he has hitherto so honorably occupied.

Some there were who withheld their suffrages from Mr. C. because they had voted for him on former occasions ; while others, as in the case of the Athenian Aristides, were tired of hearing him talked of, and lauded, as the great promoter of internal improvements, and the champion of state rights.

In still further accounting for the result of the late election, the peculiar character of Mr. Rochester is also to be included in the estimate. In my excursion through the state, and after a pretty minute enquiry, I have not been able to discover any thing of importance that he has ever accomplished, or that he was even known to the great body of the people. Such facts as I have succeeded in collecting, I will give you. I have already apprized you, that he is the humble and willing instrument of Mr. Clay, and that through him he is bound, in strict and undeviating allegiance to the national administration. His friendship with Mr. Clay, it is asserted, was finally consummated at the gaming table ; and as congenial spirits, *similis simile gaudet*. As it regards talents or public services, he is almost entirely unknown. This obscurity, however, was his advantage. With the complete organization and disci-

pline of the Bucktail party, it was sufficient that he received what they term a regular nomination. So long, therefore, as he had not done any thing which could be particularly offensive to the party, his obscure character, while it protected him from any very serious charges, placed him in rather an advantageous point of view. The maxim *omne ignotum pro magifico*, applied with peculiar force to his case and pretensions. The scribblers of the opposition had a wide field for the exercise of the imagination. They did not fail to dress him out in all the brilliant colors of the rainbow. The owl strutted an ostrich—the frog swelled into an ox—and the jack assumed the lofty port of the lion. These puffings were certainly not without their effects in many parts of the state. His defects were carefully concealed, and his entire incompetency for the station to which he aspired, was but little more than suspected. The reverse, however, was the case in those parts where he was better known. In the town of Bath, in the county of Steuben, where it is said he formerly resided, there was a majority of 250 against him ; and in the town of Gates, where he now resides, a majority of about one hundred.

Besides his general obscurity, he had another important advantage which operated powerfully in his favour. He was a Western man, and local and geographical feelings were in many instances successfully appealed to. In this question, the comparative merits of the Candidates were wholly disregarded. The pride of locality, and the supposed interests of that section of the State, were made to operate in his behalf. Governor Clinton was called a Southern man—his family it was said, had held the office for near thirty years ; and it was time that the West should assert its claim to the first office in the gift of the people. As to his being a Southern man, it was probably forgotten at the moment, that his labours and talents had been almost exclusively expended for the advancement of the interests and prosperity of the West. That the grand Canal carried into successful operation, principally through his instrumentality, was the highest and most valuable boon, ever bestowed by any individual. The fact that his family had occupied the office for several years, was seriously urged, as

if the merit and services of the illustrious patriot George Clinton, ought to form an objection to the advancement of his Nephew, who might, and probably would have been Governor, had he never existed. These weak and futile reasons, were however, gravely employed by the assembled deputies at Herkimer, and they were certainly not without their influence. A sort of esprit du corps, so common to large and popular bodies, operated to keep out of view the magnitude of the occasion, and the relative qualifications of the Candidates.

This circumstance was rendered still more formidable, by the want of a standard of comparison between the two individuals. In no single point could they be brought together---the positive absence of any public act of Mr. Rochester, and his total insignificance, left him wholly unapproachable when placed by the side of the high character and splendid services of Governor Clinton. What is unknown cannot be compared with what is known. Had some other person been placed in opposition, for instance, the Honorable Mr. Sanford, some strong points of contrast would have been furnished, and his defeat would have been most signal and decided.

The whole system, was however, put into most vigorous operation, by the usual agents of money, expresses, and a perfect organization of all their strength. It would be difficult to imagine a more regular or better disciplined body of partizans, than those who composed the faction in opposition to Governor Clinton. For several years they have held all the principal offices, whether of honor or profit, and they have thus been enabled to form a perfectly willing and submissive band of followers. They have it in their power with the greatest ease to touch every point, and by their various ramifications to make themselves felt in every section of the State.

Under such circumstances, Governor Clinton has succeeded, and succeeded by a respectable majority. His weight of character and eminent services, have carried him triumphantly through the fiery trial. His popularity throughout the State, rests upon higher ground, than at any former period. It is the expression of the free and voluntary sentiment of the people uninfluenced by any extraneous exciting causes, as in

1824; and against the best appointed opposition, and under the most unfavourable circumstances. It furnishes the most conclusive evidence, that his success is not the result of party discipline or temporary excitement; but that it is based upon the more honorable and exalted principles of public worth and political sagacity. With a Senate and House of Assembly opposed to him, he has still been able to bear away the triumph, and neither the hydra of foreign interference, nor the corrupt influence of official station, nor yet the most perfect marshalling of an unrelenting and unprincipled opposition, could despoil him of the gratitude or suffrages of an intelligent people.

I have given you the causes which have produced the result at the late Election, I will now proceed to narrate and expose some of the lesser artifices and falsehoods which were employed to asperse the character of Governor Clinton, and if possible to defeat him, in order that you may be enabled to judge of the practises which are sometimes resorted to, by desperate partizans. My limits and time will not admit of giving them all in detail, nor will it be necessary *ex uno disce omnis*.—Foremost in the ranks of scurrility and abuse appears the Albany Argus. This paper is nominally conducted by a little insignificant tool of the faction, called Edwin Croswell, whose malignity is only equalled by his exquisite pomposity, and of whom it is sufficient to say that he has had the base ingratitude, in connection with the New-York National Advocate, to recommend the adoption of a course of policy to the majority in the next Legislature, which must inevitably lead to the abandonment and defeat of his former patron, to whom he owes all his importance and support. During the last year, he has received a powerful ally in the person of Azariah C. Flagg, the present Secretary of State. This Flagg, I am informed, was formerly the printer of an obscure country paper, at Plattsburgh, the name of which I did not learn. Possessing some talent for billingsgate, and being known to be wholly unscrupulous in the means he employed for the advancement of the views of his political friends, he was brought to the Capital, for the purpose of executing the low work, which his

leaders were ashamed of being engaged in. These two scribblers have been particularly active in retailing abuse and reviving exploded and stale calumnies against Governor Clinton. Some of the most prominent, are all that I shall be able at present to give you.

Perhaps the most unblushing of these slanders, was one in relation to the Welland Canal, which has lately been undertaken, in order to open a communication in the Canadian territory for large vessels, between Lake Erie and Ontario.—During a late session of the British Parliament, the project was brought before a committee, to whom was referred the subject of emigration. Several gentlemen were examined, and among others, Mr. Bolton, the solicitor general, of Upper Canada. He testified that Governor Clinton had expressed an opinion “that the Welland Canal would be a better outlet and inlet for the Upper Lakes, than the Erie Canal, and that it was a most important operation.” Upon this, the writers for the *Argus* seized with eagerness. After passing through their polluting alembic, it was made to appear that he had declared “that the Welland Canal would take much business from the Erie Canal, and that he preferred the interests of Canada to those of his own State.” They then commenced a serious attack upon the patriotism and consistency of Governor Clinton, as if they imagined they could for a moment delude the people into a belief, that he who had staked his reputation, his influence, and all his future prospects, upon the issue of the great work, which has already immortalized him, could at the very moment of complete success turn traitor to its interests, and sacrifice the honors he had so nobly earned.

Another charge against Governor Clinton and his friends, was, that the Assembly of 1825, a majority of which was composed of his supporters, were *exclusively* in favour of incorporating a large number of Banks and Insurance Companies, and that it was wholly to be ascribed to the virtue and firmness of the Bucktail party in the Senate, that the State was not deluged with such incorporations. This falsehood was not only asserted in the *Argus*, but it was gravely urged in the address issued by the Convention at Herkimer. Of its

entire want of truth, the journals of the Senate furnish the most incontestible evidence. "By a reference to the report of Mr. Redfield, at page 637, it will be seen that there were fifteen bills for the incorporation of Banks, pending before the Senate, and among them one to incorporate the Onondaga county Bank. These bills were known to depend upon the same merits, and that the fate of one would decide the whole. Under these circumstances, and as a trial of the question, on the last day of the session, Mr. Earl made a motion that the Senate should take up the consideration of the bill to incorporate the Onondaga Bank. At page 657, will be found the ayes and noes on this motion. For the affirmative, Messrs. Bowman, Burrows, Cramer, Dudley, Earl, Ellsworth, Greenly, Haight, Lake, McCall, McIntyre, Morgan, Redfield, Thorn, and Ward, 15. In the negative, Messrs. Burt, Colden, Gardiner, Lefferts, Lynde, Mallory, McMichael, Nelson, Spencer, Wilkeson, Wooster, Wright, 11. Thus the only question presented to the Senate, which could finally and effectually determine, that no Bank bill would be taken up, only one (Mr. Morgan) of those who voted in the affirmative, belonged to the party attached to Mr. Clinton, while all the others were the Bucktails or Republicans of the Argus. A motion was subsequently made to postpone the bill indefinitely, which was carried 20 in the affirmative, and 8 in the negative, to wit: Messrs. Bowman, Burrows, Earl, Ellsworth, Greenly, Morgan, Nelson, and Redfield.

In the Assembly of that year, Messrs. Goodell, Hayden, Mixer, Monell and Schuyler, were by far the most prominent Bucktails, and possessed beyond all question, the most decided influence. In tracing their votes on 19 bills of this description which passed the House, I find that Mr. Goodell voted for 17 against 2. Mr. Hayden for 15, and did not vote for the others. Mr. Mixer for 16 against 3. Mr. Monell for the whole 19. Mr. Schuyler for 8 against 6, and did not vote on the remainder." From these facts, you will be able to judge how much right the Bucktail party have to claim any merit in defeating the incorporation of these associations, and how entirely destitute of veracity their charges against their political opponents.

The Assembly of 1825 were next accused of extravagance and a waste of public money, and as a proof, it was asserted by the *Argus*, that the expenses of 1823, amounted to \$2190, those of 1824, to \$3280, while those of 1825, amounted to \$7370. While making this statement, the candour of the Editor would not allow of his also informing the public, that in the latter sum were included several items, which were for articles of a permanent nature. The truth was, that the contingent expenses of 1825, were less than those of preceding or subsequent years. The amount was swelled in the first place by the extraordinary expenses in fitting up, repairing, painting, and new furnishing the apartments of the Assembly; and secondly, by the unpaid bills of the preceeding year. A reference to the journals of the following year, will fully explain the whole matter, and further satisfy the impartial inquirer at how low a rate the truth or frankness of the authors of such unfounded accusations, are to be estimated.

The last of these slanders which I shall notice, was the one in relation to Col. Pell, the Agent appointed for the settlement of the accounts of the State with the United States. This Agent held his appointment under an act of the Legislature of 1818, and had been continued until his salary amounted to \$13,000, and a deficit appeared in his account with this State of \$7000. Upon a consultation had in May 1822, between Governor Clinton, Mr. Comptroller Savage, (now Chief Justice) and Col. Pell, it was decided that the appointment should be continued on account of the charges for repairs of arms which had not been finally settled, but were then under discussion. Under these circumstances, and notwithstanding Col. Pell had given adequate security for the payment of all sums received on account of the State, notwithstanding a *Bucktail* Comptroller, and a *Bucktail* Attorney General, during the whole period were in office, clothed with full authority to collect the deficiency, Governor Clinton was yet charged by these unprincipled calumniators, with retaining him in office, and condemned for the defalcation of this Agent.

Such are some of the falsehoods which were manufactured

and circulated by this organ of the party, the printer to the State, and his example was but too faithfully copied by the more contemptible scribblers of the faction. Its agents and panders were busily engaged in abusing the public credulity, and poisoning the public ear with the most slanderous and unfounded charges.

Of these, the most base and wanton, and one which manifested the most malignant spirit of wickedness, was that in relation to a melancholy affair which occurred in the county of Columbia. A young lad by the name of Tayloe, from the State of Virginia, in an unfortunate encounter with another lad, gave him a wound with a knife, which proved mortal.—He was immediately arrested and brought to trial upon an indictment for manslaughter, found by a Grand Jury of the county. Of this charge, he was found guilty, but immediately recommended by the jury to the Executive, for a pardon. In this recommendation, six Judges united; among these, were Judge Duer, formerly a federalist, but now one of the “high minded” Bucktails, and Judge Butler, the father of B. F. Butler, Esq. of Albany, a leading member of the party. The public prosecutor, J. Wilcoksen, Esq. a brother in law of Mr. Van Buren, and his associate counsel, Mr. Jordan, together with several other highly respectable individuals, joined in the same petition. Under such circumstances, it would have been tyranny not to have exercised the power with which the law had invested the Executive—he was pardoned. At the proper season, however, this act of clemency was produced as a distinct accusation against Governor Clinton. “Tayloe” and “Rochester” were placed in opposition to each other in placards and other scurrilous handbills. The cry was raised, “Clinton pardons the rich man’s son, but the poor man’s son must sue for mercy in vain.” He was basely stigmatized as withdrawing from justice, the wealthy southern planter; and a bribe was even asserted to have quickened the motions of Executive mercy. The baseness and profligacy which such means indicate, is manifest. It however produced its effect. Thousands of votes were lost to Mr. Clinton in Colum-

bia and the neighbouring counties. The unsuspecting were deceived by the boldness and audacity with which the slander was propagated, and the honest electors were made the dupes of the designing and mendacious partizan.

While this foul calumny was disseminated in the Eastern part of the State, at the West a no less malignant and groundless charge was employed by these minions of an unprincipled faction. In this instance, they selected the order of the Freemasons as the subject out of which the slander was to be framed. An individual who had threatened to reveal the secrets of the fraternity, a short time previous to the election, suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. The persons who originally took this individual into pretended custody on legal process, were well known; but suspicions were excited that he had been transferred to others, who had either inhumanly murdered him, or at least kept him in confinement. Governor Clinton was accordingly called upon for an exercise of the Executive interference. Finding that the original offenders were known, and that from them the whole matter might be probably traced step by step, he merely issued a proclamation for the apprehension of all persons concerned, without offering a specific reward, but providing for the payment of all necessary expenses to accomplish the object. At a subsequent period, aware no doubt of the baseness of party malignity, he was induced to send forth a second proclamation, in which a large reward was promised for the detection and apprehension of the perpetrators of the outrage. All was not sufficient—being at the head of the fraternity, and having manifested his zeal for the order on several occasions, his enemies supposed the affair might be made political, and turned to their advantage. They commenced by asserting that he had connived at their escape, that he was desirous of stifling enquiry, and finally that as the power of pardoning resided with him, the criminals need be under no fear of punishment, even if discovered and convicted. Although Rochester was himself a mason, yet this was denied by his supporters, either to obtain the full benefit of the slanders against Governor Clinton, or

because they were ashamed of "the ancient and honorable fraternity."

In other sections of the State equally unprincipled means were employed. Governor Clinton was accused of being a *Presbyterian*, and of favouring the Bible Society. That it was contemplated to establish a Hierarchy, an union of Church and State. In Madison county, a Methodist was threatened with ecclesiastical discipline, if he voted for Gov. Clinton. Thus even our holy religion was prostituted to the base purposes of faction. Sectarian zeal was appealed to, for the accomplishment of party ascendancy, and even the Bible itself, and that most efficient agent for its extensive and general distribution, was scandalized by the contaminating breath of these irreverent miscreants.

There are yet two other charges directed against the person of Governor Clinton, which I cannot refrain from noticing, because they both have been frequently reiterated after the most conclusive and public refutation. The first was his opposition to the late war, and desertion of the republican party; the second, his opposition to the call of a Convention in this State, and the extension of the Elective Franchise.

As to the first, it was wholly built upon an article which made its appearance in the *National Intelligencer* sometime in the year 1812. It was there asserted that Mr. Clinton had declared "that all political connection between himself and the democratic party in the United States had ceased, and would not again be renewed," and the names of Gov. Morris, Harrison G. Otis, and Robert Goodloe Harper, were given as the persons to whom the declaration had been made. These Gentlemen immediately in their proper persons denied the truth of the accusation, and all knowledge of the circumstances. Governor Clinton's opposition to the late war, was also abundantly disproved by his manly support of it on all occasions—by his application for an active command in the field, by his instrumentality in procuring loans for the support of the national Government in their hour of distress, and by his addresses to the Grand Jury, while Mayor of the City of

New-York, and his complimentary notices of our Naval and Military heroes.

His opposition to the call of a convention in this state, and the extension of the Elective Franchise was proved to be no less untrue. In his speech to the Legislature in 1820, he recommended a convention, with such powers as should be "committed to their cognizance by the *concurrent* act of the Legislature and *the people*." He was thus in fact its first and original proposer. It is true that he voted against the first Bill which was passed, in consequence, because it called a convention with unlimited powers *without a consultation of the people*. No sooner however were the people treated with a becoming respect, and provision made for a submission of the question to them, than he cheerfully and unhesitatingly yielded his sanction. His hostility to the extension of the Elective Franchise was also equally false. In his message to the Legislature in 1825, after pointing out the inequalities and injustice of the present qualifications, he concludes by recommending a modification of the Constitution, so "as to render citizenship, full age, and competent residence, the only requisite qualifications."

Notwithstanding the utter falsehood of these charges, they were from time to time reasserted, during the course of the late Election. From the Herkimer convention and the Albany Argus down to the most contemptible and insignificant village editor, they were employed with the most unblushing effrontery. In some instances they undoubtedly produced the effect intended. The proof to refute them was not always at hand, and the honest yeomanry of the state were thus deceived into an opposition, which but for these bold slanders would have only received their contempt.

One thing is however too remarkable to be passed over without notice. Amid all this volley of abuse, this accumulation of ribaldry and Billingsgate; this most extraordinary opposition, this factious combination—this unholy alliance of incompatible principles, and hostile men, did not, and dared not to utter a murmur of disapprobation against any act of

his administration, or to impeach his private character. All united in characterizing it as liberal in the highest degree, as calculated to advance the honour and prosperity of the state, and as indicative of the most sound and statesman-like views of the public interests.

I shall conclude this communication, which I fear has already extended itself to too great a length, by giving my opinion as derived from minute inquiry and full consideration of all the circumstances connected with the late Election.—That opinion then is, that notwithstanding the diminished majority of Gov. Clinton, *he now is, and certainly ought to be as popular in this state, as in 1824.* A few of the reasons for this opinion, but more particularly the bases upon which this popularity rests, I will endeavour briefly to present to you.—They will be found to be permanent in their nature, elevated in their character, and benignant in their effects.

The first of these is, his patriotic and statesman-like character and views of all subjects, whether of national or state policy.—Our happy form of Government has frequently been made the subject of remark, and drawn forth the profoundest skill in decorating and securing the noble structure. “A republican government is certainly most congenial with the nature, most propitious to the welfare, and most conducive to the dignity of our species. Man becomes degraded in proportion as he loses the right of self-government. Every effort ought, therefore to be made to fortify our free institutions; and the great bulwark of security is to be found in education; the culture of the heart and the head; the diffusion of knowledge, piety and morality. A virtuous and enlightened man can never submit to degradation; and a virtuous and enlightened people will never breathe in the atmosphere of slavery.” Such is his language, and in conformity with these sentiments, he has uniformly appeared as the advocate of education among all orders of society; Colleges, Academies, and Common Schools have been peculiarly the objects of his favourable notice. His exertions and labours have personally been extended to their general establishment, and to the extension of

their sphere of usefulness. Agriculture, and the useful arts have from time to time claimed his attention, and been presented with energy and force to the consideration of the delegates of the people. Time will not permit a further detail.—For a full exhibition of his views, in relation to general policy, I must refer you to his several writings, but more particularly to his communications to the Legislature of the State.

Another basis upon which his popularity is founded, is his efforts and success in the cause of internal improvements.—The Erie Canal is a noble monument of his political sagacity, his unwearied perseverance, and his patriotic exertions. The great resources and splendid prospects which it has opened to the State of New-York, demand their gratitude and their united support of the individual who, amidst reproach and the most determined opposition, adventured his character and hopes upon its construction. The success of this work has given an impulse to the cause of improvement throughout the union. It has placed New-York, foremost in enterprise, wealth and population among her sisters of the confederacy. She may well therefore be proud of the man who set in motion the mighty machine, and by whose activity and zeal the project has been mainly accomplished.

The third and last ground upon which the opinion is founded is, the undeviating assertion and vindication of State Rights by Gov. Clinton. Deeply impressed with the importance of preserving unimpaired the balance between the National and State Governments, and of confining each to their legitimate and Constitutional orbits, he has at several times directed the public attention to this momentous subject. On a late occasion he thus expressed himself, “Without state authorities, there can be no civil liberty, and no good government; for it is utterly impossible that so extensive a country can be bound together, unless as a confederation or a military despotism.” Nor has he disguised his fears, “Instead of the predominance of a controlling power in the states, the centripetal force of the General Government has had perhaps too great a preponderance. The officers of the latter exceed those

of the former, in rank, power, number and emolument; its patronage is commensurate with its superior resources; and it touches in its relations and ramifications, every chord of ambition; presents the most spacious theatre for the display of great talents, and for the gratifications of lofty aspirations." Such have heretofore been his sentiments, and it is not probable that the events of the late election will have a tendency to weaken or change his impressions. They must serve rather to confirm his former doubts, and realize his too doubtful fears. The people of the United States have therefore a pledge that his efforts will not be spared to preserve entire the integrity and influence of their state institutions, and that he who has witnessed the monster of foreign interference and felt its malignant operation will be the last to abuse the fatal engine.

Upon this subject, the extent of my tour has satisfied me that a most dangerous and insulting interference has been exercised at the late election. It is time that the State of New-York should assert its own claims and vindicate her independence in the confederacy. This can never be effected, so long as the system of training up the candidate for the Presidency at Washington is adhered to. State Rights can never be respected under the administration of that ulcer on the body politic, Henry Clay, or his leader Mr. Adams. Let New-York then be true to her own dignity and rights, and with united ranks present to the Union her Candidate for the first office in the gift of the Nation.

I am, yours sincerely.

